सुधार लाने के लिए कुछ प्रावधान करने वाले हैं ? पहला मेरा यह प्रश्न है और दूसरा प्रश्न यह है कि आपका एयर इंडिया का जो स्टाफ है उनके साथ जो उनके रिलेटिव होते हैं तो कम्प्युटर्स के साथ, पैसेंजर्स के साथ जो रिलेशंस चलते हैं उससे विदेशों में भी हमारी बदनामी होती है और लोग पैसेंजर्स को लेने के बजाए अपने रिलेटिव को लाने की सोचते हैं। ऐसा समय समय पर न्यूज में भी आया है। तो इस विषय पर आप क्या करने वाले हैं ताकि हमारी एयर इंडिया की जो इज्जत पुराने जमाने में विदेशों में थी वैसे ही बनी रहे।

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (DR. MANMOHAN SINGH): Sir, the hon. Member has just now mentioned that there are politicians who stayed at the Centour Hotel and have not paid their bills. I think this is a reflection on all the politicians. I would, therefore, urge upon the hon. Minister that if there are any politicians who have stayed at the Centour Hotel and have not paid their Bills, make their names public.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I associate myself with Dr. Manmohan Singh.

SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Sir, I also support Dr. Manmohan Singh.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Now the Defence Minister will make his statement. Thereafter, the Minister of Civil Aviation would give his reply.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Explosion of Ammunitions in the Ammunition Depot, Bharatpur

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): Sir, Ammunition Depot, Bharatpur was established during the period 1957-65 and is located approximately six kms. from Bharatpur town. This Depot holds parts of Southern Command Reserve and some portions of Army Headquarters Reserve ammunition. The Depot was holding approximately 30,000 tonnes of ammunition under both permanent (17,220 metric tonnes) as well as non standard storage (12,700 metric tonnes).

The sequence of events as reported by the Army Headquarters is as follows:-

(a) The fire had started at approximately 1530 hrs. on 28th April, 2000, from outside the perimeter wall.

(b) High temperatures ranging from 45 to 47 degrees Celsius and prevailing strong South Westerly winds aided the rapid spread of fire to the open plinths.

(c) The explosion and fire continued unabated throughout the night of 28/29 April, 2000. The periodicity of explosion gradually reduced during the day on 29th April, 2000. Finally, the fire was brought under control by the evening of 29th April, 2000. There has been no explosion since 2200 hours on 29th April, 2000.

(d) The Chief of Staff, Headquarters Corps located at Mathura was asked to coordinate fire fighting efforts and all available resources at Bharatpur, and additional resources from Alwar, Agra and Mathura were placed at his disposal.

While detailed assessment is being made separately, on 29th April, 2000, the area was reconnoitered. It is confirmed that ammunition stores in 20 Open Plinths and 9 affected sheds weighing approximately 12111 MT and costing about Rs.376 crores was lost. In addition, infrastructure of replacement cost of approximately Rs.13 crores has also been destroyed/damaged. The ammunition in the remaining storage sheds is *prima facie* safe but this would need confirmation after detailed inspection.

Types of Ammunition Stored in this depot are (a) Air Defence Missiles (b) Anti Tank Guided Missiles (c) Artillery ammunition of all types (d) Tank and BMP ammunition (e) Small Arms ammunition, and (f) Mines and explosives.

As per information available, 2 civilians died and 7 were injured. The State Government have been asked by the Ministry for a report on damage to life and property. They are in the process of surveying this damage and have informed the Ministry on 1.5.2000 that their report will be sent in about a week's time. Compensation will be paid for the damages caused, within 7 days of receipt of proposal from the Government of Rajasthan. Three Army personnel have also been suffered minor injuries.

The following steps have been taken:- (i) Court of Inquiry under a Major General has been constituted; (ii) Adequate qualified personnel to inspect remaining ammunition sheds in the depot have been ordered to be moved.

The existing security and safety guidelines are:- (a) A broad policy letter regarding precautions to be taken to prevent fire accidents with the onset of summer was issued on 28th April, 1997, and repromulgated on 17th April, 2000. (b) Each ammunition depot has its own security and fire fighting instructions which are updated periodically. (c) Annual inspections are undertaken by technical as well as administrative heads. (d) Between 1996-97 up to 31.3.2000, Rs.241.73 crores were allocated for building standard storage accommodation. Out of this, Rs.126.25 crores were sanctioned in 1999-2000.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Now, there will be reply by the Minister of Civil Aviation. Mr. Minister, I would like to mention one thing. When I was a college-going boy, in 1952, there used to be a beautiful advertisement, "There is an air about India". We are confident that you will bring that air back to Air India.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Poor performance and mismanagement of Air India -Contd.

श्री शरद यादव : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, सुबह 12 बजे से रक्षा मंत्री जी के वक्तव्य को छोड़ कर एयर इंडिया की हालत जो पतली हुई है, कमजोर हुई है, इस पर आज जो बहस हुई है, मैं माननीय सदस्यों का बहुत आभार मानता हूं और उन्हें शुक्रिया और धन्यवाद करता हूं। जो बाकी इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर इस देश में है, उसके प्रति जितनी चिंता 50 वर्ष में रही है उतनी सिविल एविएशन के सेक्टर के प्रति नहीं रही है। उसके कारणों में मैं नहीं जाना चाहता हूं। लेकिन यह बात अपने आप में सच है। उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, आज यह कालिंग अटेंशन था। माननीय सदस्यों ने सवाल थोड़े संक्षेप में पूछने थे। राज्य सभा का यह आगस्त हाउस है। अभी बहुत से लोग इस पर बोलना चाहते थे। लेकिन जिन मित्रों ने आज सिविल एविएशन का यह कारपोरेशन जो एयर इंडिया है इस संस्था के बारे में जो विचार, जो बातें, जो चीजें रखी हैं शायद पहले सिविल एविएशन पर इतनी लम्बी बहस नहीं हुई। यह एक ही सब्जेक्ट पर हुई है। कालिंग अटेंशन में पहले इनका नाम था - श्री संजय निरुपम जी, श्री प्रेम